

**AUGUST/LABOR DAY CRACKDOWN
LAW ENFORCEMENT PLANNER
SAMPLE Op-Ed
<TBD> WORDS**



'Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.'
Aggressive Impaired Driving Crackdown Seeks to Save Lives

Drunk driving is one of America's deadliest crimes. In 2005, nearly 13,000 people were killed in highway crashes involving a driver or motorcycle operator with an illegal blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher. The picture for motorcycle operators is particularly bleak. Forty-one percent of the 1,878 motorcycle operators who died in single-vehicle crashes in 2005 had BAC levels of .08 or higher.

That's why local law enforcement officials will join with thousands of other law enforcement and highway safety agencies across the nation from August 17 and throughout the Labor Day holiday to take part in the *Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.* crackdown on impaired driving.

Our message is simple. No matter what you drive—a passenger car, pickup, sport utility vehicle or motorcycle—if we catch you driving impaired, we will arrest you. No exceptions. No excuses. We will be out in force conducting sobriety checkpoints, saturation patrols and using undercover officers to get more drunk drivers off the road—and save lives that might otherwise be lost.

Driving with a BAC of .08 or higher is illegal in every state. Yet we continue to see far too many people suffer debilitating injuries and loss of their loved ones as a result of impaired driving. This careless disregard for human life must stop. To help ensure that happens, our local law enforcement officers are dedicated to arresting impaired drivers wherever and whenever they find them.

To further prevent people from driving while impaired, many judges sentence drunk drivers not only to jail time, but also require certain convicted impaired drivers to install ignition interlock devices on their vehicles. Ignition interlocks can detect when an offender has been drinking and prevent a vehicle from starting, thus helping to reduce the chances that offenders might again take to the road while impaired. Other technologies prescribed by judges include transdermal devices that detect alcohol through a person's skin and are used in combination with a treatment plan.

It's important to remember, however, that much of the tragedy that comes from drunk driving could be prevented if everyone would take these few simple precautions:

- If you are planning to drink alcohol with friends, designate a sober driver before going out and give that person your keys;
- If you're impaired, call a taxi, use mass transit or call a sober friend or family member to get you home safely;
- Use your community's Sober Rides program [insert your local Sober Rides specifics here];

- Promptly report drunk drivers you see on the roadways to law enforcement;
- Wear your seat belt while in a car or use a helmet and protective gear when on a motorcycle as these are your best defenses against an impaired driver;
- And remember, if you know someone who is about to drive or ride while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get to where they are going safely.

Drunk driving is simply not worth the risk. Not only do you risk killing yourself or someone else, but the trauma and financial costs of a crash or an arrest for impaired driving can be significant. Violators often face jail time, the loss of their driver's license, higher insurance rates, attorney fees, time away from work, and dozens of other expenses.

Don't take the chance. Drunk driving is a serious crime. Remember: *Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.*

For more information, visit www.StopImpairedDriving.org.

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